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Ex-spy enjoys the heat (Tucson's)

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Question: What does being a CIA agent abroad have in common with selling real estate in Tucson?

The answer, courtesy of Tucsonian Paul Garbler:

"Persuading a non-American to work for you (as a CIA man) is not all that different from recruiting a buyer or seller."

Garbler, who spent the better part of 24 years working in major capitals of Europe for the CIA, concedes that the similarity would not have been apparent to him 10 years ago and that, if some had told him then that he would be selling real estate, "I would have chuckled."

that flying airplanes."

In 1956 he resigned from the Navy, joined the CIA and served in Europe and at the Langley, Va., headquarters of the CIA.

"My participation was almost entirely confined to espionage against the Soviet target," he said.

He was three-time chief of a CIA station abroad and twice chief of operations of a CIA geographical division.

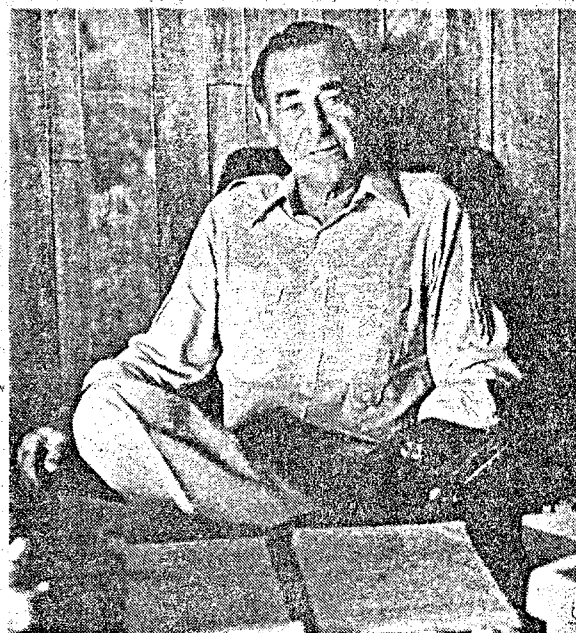
Because CIA activities are necessary to protect the U.S. here and abroad, Garbler said, he lamented the wave of criticism that ravaged the agency in the 1970s and culminated in a Congressional review of the CIA's methods and covert operations.

five of them."

He said Agee destroyed Garbler's efforts as CIA station chief in Stockholm "with just one visit to town."

"Agee blew my whole station in Stockholm in 1976 by naming every person in the station and some outside," Garbler fumed. "I could go about my business abroad if I didn't have to keep looking over my shoulder wondering if Agee or a sympathizer would identify me."

Garbler also implied that Agee's listing of the names and addresses of CIA operatives in a pamphlet published in Greece in November 1976 may have resulted in the shooting death of Garbler's friend, Dick Welch, chief of the CIA station in Athens, one



Paul Garbler

From CIA to real estate

Garbler is particularly upset about CIA agents who have resigned and then have written exposes and blown the cover of operations.

After his retirement two years ago, he said he tried tending a garden but it bored him, so he moved to Tucson and became a real estate agent.

A suave and thoughtful man who lives on Tucson's East Side, Garbler is reluctant to discuss details of some of his CIA activities but will talk about others.

He got into that line of work when he joined Naval intelligence and learned Russian 36 years ago after compiling a distinguished war record with the Navy as an aviation officer in World War II.

"I felt it would be very interesting to be involved in the emergence of the United States as a number one world power," he recalled. "I wouldn't be able to do

"The CIA has no will of its own, or authority to go off in one direction or another," Garbler declared. "It fulfills the needs of the government by responding to the president's directives."

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No. 1 nemesis among them, at least for Garbler, is former CIA agent Philip Agee who, disillusioned by CIA activities he observed and took part in, sought to unveil CIA operations in Latin America and elsewhere.

"Fortunately, these people represent a minuscule minority of CIA members," Garbler said. "There are about

month later.

Garbler lauded legislation presently before Congress that would make it a felony to reveal the names of CIA officers operating under cover.

Many careers in the Soviet Union division of the CIA were damaged during the "period of paranoia" that swept through the agency in the mid-1960s, Garbler said. It began when high-ranking Soviet KGB agent Anatoli Golitsin defected and turned himself over to the CIA station in Helsinki in 1961.

Golitsin, who Garbler said proved to be a "gold mine" of information, also provided the CIA with a hazy character sketch of an alleged "mole" (counterspy) who, the Soviet defector

said, was working at middle or upper levels in the CIA. The allegations led to a massive, lengthy in-house investigation of several officers.

If a mole was hiding in the agency, he was never discovered. Nevertheless, some CIA officers were hurt by the investigation, Garbler said.

"These officers were unjustly punished, their careers came to an end ... or the good jobs were not available to them," Garbler said, adding, "A side effect was to paralyze operations against the Soviet target for an extensive period of time," because if there was a mole working within the agency the Russians would have knowledge of any action undertaken against them.

Garbler remains staunchly loyal to the CIA.

"The mission of the CIA is to make certain the United States gov-

ernment is well enough informed on what is going on in the world in order to maintain our freedoms through forewarning," he said.

While Garbler admitted he was sad to leave the excitement and challenge of CIA work in Europe at age 60, the transition into semi-retirement in Tucson real estate has been an easy one.

Wearing a blue work shirt rolled up at the sleeves, Garbler crossed his arms and admired the cactus garden outside the window of his home.

"We happened to have friends who were very much taken with Tucson," he said, "We came out to visit them for a week in 1978, and a week later we purchased this home."

And considering the summer temperatures here, you would have to think of him as one more spy who came in from the cold.